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## BOOK REVIEWS

EARLY BABYLONIAN LETTERS FROM LARSA. HENRY FREDERICK LUTZ, Ph.D.  
(Yale Oriental Series, Babylonian Texts, Vol. II). Yale University Press.  
1917. Pp. 41. Pl. lvii. \$5.00.

Through the effort and discriminating judgment of Professor A. T. Clay, Yale University has acquired what is probably to be regarded as the most interesting collection of Babylonian tablets in this country. The philological and archæological material of the Babylonian Collection is being published in the Yale Oriental Series, the initial volume of which was issued by Professor Clay in 1915. The second volume is by one of Professor Clay's pupils, and contains the autographed text of one hundred and fifty-two early letters from Larsa, accompanied by two plates of half-tone reproductions, an introduction, and the usual name-lists.

The evidence presented by Dr. Lutz is convincing that these letters came from the mounds of Senkereh, the modern site of the ancient Larsa (Ellasar), and that they were written during the first dynasty of Babylon, although in only a few cases is it possible to determine the reign to which they belong. Ancient letters owe their preservation to the fact that they formed part of royal or temple archives, and their contents are usually of a business or official character. These letters are for the most part business communications which do not add much that is new to the known data of legal and business contracts. This is, however, far from denying the worth of such publications, for they justify themselves on the linguistic and economic side. It is a matter of considerable interest to find the name Abraham written out fully for the first time in cuneiform, *A-ba-ra-ḫa-am*. The antiquity of the name was placed beyond dispute when Professor Ungnad found the name *Ab(am)râma* in contract tablets from Dilbat, dated in the reign of Ammizaduga, the fourth successor of Hammurabi. In the Karnak list of places conquered by Sheshonk I, the contemporary of Rehoboam, the Field of Abram is mentioned, and an official under Esarhaddon (677 B.C.) bears the name *Abi-râmu*. Dr. Lutz maintains — in the writer's opinion correctly — that *A-ba-ra-ma*, *A-ba-am-ra-ma*, *A-ba-am-ra-am*, and *A-ba-ra-ḫa-am* stand for one and the same name; that these are

foreign renderings of a West Semitic name אַבְרָהָם, which was re-introduced in the West in its Babylonian form, subject to the usual variation in foreign names, including the orthography with ה. It goes without saying that the word-play of Genesis 17 5 has no philological basis. So far as we know, the name was from the beginning a personal name and there is no evidence that there ever was a tribe Abram or Abraham. This discovery of the personal name in Babylonia during the first dynasty of Babylon is obviously not a corroboration of the statement that the particular person called Abraham lived in Ur and migrated to Canaan (Genesis 11 28, 31).

The admirable transliteration and translation of thirty-three selected texts is welcome to the student and general reader alike, and we hope that Dr. Lutz will be able to carry out his original plan of translating all of the letters contained in this volume. A few errors — some of them merely typographical — may be listed. On page 8, no. 106: 4 is transliterated<sup>11</sup> *Šamaš ù<sup>12</sup> Marduk li-ba-al-li-tu-ku-nu-ti*, “may Shamash and Marduk preserve your life.” Inasmuch as the letter is addressed to two persons, the plural pronoun *kunûti* is to be expected, but the cuneiform text on plate XXXIX has the singular pronoun *ka*. Has Dr. Lutz unconsciously corrected a grammatical error on the part of the original writer, or has he himself made one in copying? On page 12, no. 25: 5 is transliterated *aš-šum di-nim ša Ilu-sù-i-bi-[su]*. No break is indicated in the text of this line on plate X, which reads: *aš-šum di-nim ša Ilu-sù-i-bi-i arad<sup>13</sup> Sin*. A collation of the text might well reveal *šu* instead of *i*, as the same name in line 13 indicates. The name occurs in no. 83:5 with the title *barû* (diviner) instead of *arad Sin*. On page 26, line 8 of no. 1, *aš-šum te-e-mi-im ša um-ma at-ta-a-ma* has been entirely omitted from the transliteration, and in the translation it is enclosed in parentheses! The numbering of the lines follows the transliteration rather than the cuneiform text, and therefore falls short by one line. In line 19 (numbered 18) *ša-a-ti* has been omitted in the transliteration but appears in parentheses in the translation. On page 28 (no. 32: 8) we would suggest that the character transliterated *mana* — it is written *ma* — might perhaps be *šiglu* (compare 12:8). In that case the redemption price would be within the known limits of the price of a male slave, instead of being “exorbitantly high.”

The copies of the tablets are exceedingly well executed, and we look forward with interest to the contributions that are to be expected from this scholar.

MARY I. HUSSEY.